

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented.) An endotracheal catheter system comprising:
a suction catheter having a distal end for suctioning secretions;
a protective sleeve surrounding a proximal longitudinal portion of the catheter;

a manifold connected to the protective sleeve for attachment to a hub of an artificial airway in fluid communication between the respiratory tract of a patient and a ventilator, said manifold having means for accommodating inspiration and expiration of respiratory gases;

a valve connected to the manifold and pivotally moveable with respect thereto for engaging the distal end of the catheter to minimize the amount of air being drawn thereinto responsive to suction through the catheter wherein the valve comprises at least one protrusion on a surface of the valve;

wherein the valve comprises a pivotable flap disposed to selectively separate the distal end of the catheter; and

a means for enhancing the turbulence of the air.

19-25. (Canceled)